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AUTHOR Rodriguez, Dalinda; Tompkins, Richard
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ABSTRACT

Current trends indicate that schools are moving toward more inclusive practices and are attempting to educate the majority of students with exceptional needs in the regular education classroom. Restructuring of schools to implement full inclusion will require that school leaders consider six factors that influence change. Creating an atmosphere and culture for change involves addressing the school's physical surroundings and structures, formal policies and rules, resources, attitudes and beliefs, and relationships. Articulating the vision emphasizes the importance of expanding support for the vision of inclusion to a broad base of parents, students, and teachers, and the role of school leaders in demonstrating their own belief in full inclusion through their actions. Planning and providing resources involves the identification, planning, and provision of time, money, building space, personnel, and other resources to appropriately educate all students in regular classrooms. Providing continuous staff development means providing all constituents with the knowledge and skills necessary for successful implementation of full inclusion. Evaluation includes regular monitoring and assessment of progress toward full inclusion. The final factor, providing continuous assistance, requires that resources and staff development are more than one-shot events and include ongoing coaching and support. (SV)

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Dalinda Rodriguez
Richard Tompkins
Southwest Educational Development Lab
Austin, Texas

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INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR ALL STUDENTS

Traditionally, when students with exceptional needs have been placed in the regular education classroom, support from pull-out programs such as special education resource, Chapter 1, and other compensatory education programs has been typical. However, reliance on pull-out programs and self-contained compensatory education classrooms is presently decreasing. Current trends indicate that schools are moving toward more inclusive practices and are attempting to educate the majority of students in the regular education classroom.

Momentum for full inclusion has been strengthening since the passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (PL 94-142), which embraces two landmark components - "free appropriate public education" and "least restrictive environment". Full inclusion is a movement that primarily addresses the second component. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (PL 101-476), which updated PL 94-142, further strengthens these components.

Restructuring schools to implement full inclusion will require that leaders consider factors that influence change. Hord (1992), suggests a useful framework. This framework includes the following:

- Creating an atmosphere and culture for change,
- Articulating the vision,
- Planning and providing resources,
- Providing training and development,
- Monitoring and checking progress, and
- Continuing to give assistance.

The following sections will discuss how school leaders can apply each of these components to the implementation of full inclusion at the campus or district level.

Creating an Atmosphere and Culture for Change

In order to implement full inclusion, leaders need to create an atmosphere and culture for change. According to Boyd (1992), school context is comprised of two dimensions - ecology and culture (Refer to *Issues*, Vol. 2, No. 2 for further information).

Ecology

Ecology pertains to physical surroundings and structures, formal policies and rules, and available resources. Physical surroundings and structures in schools include the size of the school, the physical layout of the campus, and patterns of scheduling. Policies and rules pertain to federal, state and local mandates with which schools must be in compliance. Resources include funding, time, materials, and personnel necessary to implement an innovation (Boyd, 1992).

Physical surroundings and structures. Leaders can facilitate the implementation of full inclusion by analyzing the physical surroundings and structures of the school. The layout of the campus buildings and individual classrooms are factors to consider when preparing for full inclusion to ensure that students with disabilities have access to

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all facilities. Patterns of scheduling also need to be considered in order to accommodate all students in regular education classrooms. Flexible block scheduling is one way to encourage collaboration and team teaching when teachers are provided with common planning times. Other ways a principal can provide release time for teachers to plan include:

- hiring substitutes to teach classes,
- departmentalizing,
- combining classes periodically,
- scheduling assemblies on a regular basis, and
- building early dismissal days into the school's schedule by increasing the length of some school days in order to shorten others (Beck, Broers, Hogue, Shipstead, & Knowlton, 1994).

For students who require services outside the regular classroom, such as Chapter 1 and special education services, flexible scheduling could include an elective time period during for which some students go to enrichment or high interest programs while others are provided with remedial support. This elective time provides for "added" support rather than "instead of" services to ensure that all students are in the regular classroom, benefiting from the regular education curriculum (Wheelock, 1992).

Formal policies and rules. Formal policies and rules comprise another feature of a school's ecology. Federal, state and district policies and rules influence the degree to which full inclusion may be implemented. Leaders can influence change by analyzing policies and rules to determine whether such mandates facilitate or inhibit full inclusion. If certain policies and rules inhibit the implementation of full inclusion, new policies should be developed. According to Hehir, Stariha and Walberg (1991) guidelines to consider when creating system-wide inclusion policies include:

- Principals are responsible for educating all students, regardless of their needs;
- Students attend schools which they would typically attend if they did not have exceptional needs;
- Education is provided for all students in age-appropriate settings;
- Education is provided in the regular classroom to the greatest extent possible;
- Support personnel, such as special education teachers and therapists, provide services in the regular education classroom as much as possible;
- All students with exceptional needs are provided with individualized assistance of a non-categorical nature; and
- All students are provided with assistance regardless of whether or not they have a label or an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

A policy which can be adopted at the local level may include the implementation of a pre-referral process. Garcia and Ortiz (1988) developed such a strategy in order to ensure that students with special needs are provided with an appropriate education. A pre-referral process may also be useful in reducing the number of inappropriate referrals for special education, increasing the efficiency of services provided, and ensuring more appropriate programming and support services for all students (Garcia & Ortiz, 1988).

Resources. The degree to which full inclusion is implemented is influenced by the availability of resources at the local school level. Time is one integral resource when successfully implementing full inclusion. Numerous efforts to change do not succeed because sufficient time for planning and implementation has not been provided

(Simpson, 1990). Taking time is not only important from an organizational perspective (i.e., to assure that all of the logistical and organizational details associated with inclusion are addressed). Time is also a necessary component in making sure that personnel are adequately prepared for such a change.

Funding is another essential resource for ensuring that all students are educated to the greatest extent in the regular classroom. According to Huestis (1993), funding systems should allow resources to be used to educate all students without impending ramifications or penalties. It will be necessary to work with the state education agency to assure that funding remains adequate and that using allocated funds in different ways is approved.

Still another essential resource includes the availability of adequately trained support personnel to work with regular education teachers in providing appropriate educational opportunities for all students. In most cases this will involve only the reassignment of paraprofessionals and support teachers (Chapter I, Special Education, etc.) to regular classroom settings. In some instances additional support personnel may be necessary. For those students with remedial needs or with mild disabilities, additional tutoring or modification of class content may be provided through support teachers, paraprofessionals and/or peers (Wheelock, 1992) . Support teachers may also team teach with classroom teachers to provide for more individualized instruction to all students requiring additional attention. For students with more serious disabilities, support teachers will need to work closely with classroom teachers and paraprofessionals to ensure that instruction is "parallel" to that in the regular setting (Tompkins & Cooper, 1993).

Culture

The second dimension of a school context includes culture. Attitudes and beliefs, school norms and relationships comprise a school's culture. Thus, leaders must address the school culture and that of the community when attempting to implement full inclusion.

Attitudes and beliefs. Attitudes and beliefs to consider when implementing full inclusion include those of students, teachers, support personnel and administrators. The community's attitudes and beliefs towards educating all students in the regular classroom also need to be addressed. Leaders must attempt to satisfy what the community believes is proper for schools due to the influence which external groups can have upon changing institutions (Cuban, 1990). Leaders can influence the attitudes and beliefs of individuals involved in the change by providing examples of successful full inclusion as well as involve representatives from each of the groups in the planning process.

Norms. Leaders need to attend to the informal rules that govern behavior (i.e., "the way things are done here"). Some school norms will need to change. Rather than working more or less independently, regular and special educators will need to share the responsibility of educating all of their students. School personnel will need to convey by their actions that all students are welcome in regular classrooms. Leaders can influence the school's norms by recruiting personnel who are committed to the philosophy of inclusive classrooms (Tompkins, & Cooper, 1993). Norms which reflect ownership for educating all students in the regular classroom include eliminating labels that convey a hierarchy of achievement and setting common expectations about discipline, homework and accountability (Wheelock, 1992).

Relationships. Another component of a school's culture includes relationships such those between: (1) teachers and their peers, (2) students and teachers, (3) students and their peers, and (4) school personnel and the community. Leaders can facilitate positive relationships among teachers by encouraging collaboration and team teaching. Leaders can also influence student and teacher relationships by fostering attitudes of high expectations for all students. School leaders can promote the integration of students with exceptional needs into regular classrooms by providing all students with opportunities to be accepting of others (Demchak, & Drinkwater, 1992). Opportunities for integration may include promoting peer tutoring, assigning peer "buddies," and incorporating cooperative learning strategies. Relationships between school personnel and the community can be enriched by having continuous communication with parents of all students. Weekly newsletters about school activities and student performance can be used as a method for sharing information with the community (Field, LeRoy, & Rivera, 1994). Parents can also be encouraged to play an integral role in the implementation of full inclusion by soliciting their assistance for planning purposes and for providing support in the regular classroom.

Articulating the Vision

A second component which leaders should consider when implementing full inclusion involves articulating the vision with parents, students and teachers. School leaders must genuinely believe that all students should be educated in the regular education classroom to the greatest extent possible (Guerra, Jackson, & Madsen, 1993). School leaders must also demonstrate their beliefs by acting in a manner consistent with such beliefs.

According to Louis and Miles (1990), leaders of change must go beyond articulating the vision. School leaders must also share the influence, authority, responsibility and accountability with others so that shared ownership of the vision results (Louis & Miles, 1990). When implementing full inclusion, all individuals involved (i.e., parents, teachers, administrators and related service providers) must also envision full inclusion and adopt it (Tompkins, & Cooper, 1993). In order to promote "buying into" the vision of full inclusion and acceptance of persons with exceptional needs, leaders can:

- speak to groups of parents, community members and school personnel (Beck, Boers, Hogue, Shipstead, & Knowlton, 1994),
- encourage dialogue between parents and school personnel by hosting meetings to discuss issues and concerns related to full inclusion (Wheelock, 1992),
- expose parents and staff to successful integration efforts undertaken by other schools, and
- create a realistic time-line that can facilitate a shared vision for educating all students in the regular classroom.

Planning and Providing Resources

When attempting to implement full inclusion, leaders must also plan and provide for needed resources. School leaders must identify, plan and provide for time, money, building space, personnel, and other resources needed to appropriately educate all students in regular education classrooms. Provision of such resources may entail various political interactions at the local, state and federal levels (Tompkins, & Cooper, 1993).

Guerra, Jackson, and Madsen (1993) warn that funding, training and personnel should be in place prior to decentralizing of services; thus, sufficient time for planning is essential. To implement inclusive practices prior to thoughtful planning and preparation could negatively influence the attitudes of individuals involved in full inclusion as well as "doom children with special needs to injury and failure" in the regular classroom (Guerra, Jackson & Madsen, 1993, p.1).

Providing Continuous Staff Development

Facilitative leaders need to provide continuous staff development for all constituents (Ervin, 1991). The implementation of inclusive practices will require that constituents be provided with opportunities to develop skills. Ongoing staff development should focus on the development of critical attitudes, commitment and competencies required to work effectively with students who have diverse needs (Tompkins, & Cooper, 1993). According to Ervin (1991), development programs for individuals involved in the change should include:

- awareness training,
- communication,
- collaboration,
- compromise, and
- consensus building.

Educating all students in the regular classroom requires that regular education teachers understand the unique learning styles of students with exceptional needs, special education instructional strategies, and how to foster home/school collaboration (Field, LeRoy, & Rivera, 1994) Special education teachers, however, need to understand the learning styles and activities of students in regular education classes, as well as the curriculum, instructional strategies and communication patterns which are typical of regular education programs (Field, LeRoy, & Rivera, 1994). Parents can also be provided with training workshops in order to reinforce learning at home (Wheelock, 1992).

Although a continuous staff development program should be implemented to provide support and training for constituents, such a program should be based on the results of a needs assessment (Tompkins, & Cooper, 1993). According to Sergiovanni (1990), however, staff development in the early stages of implementing an innovation should entail modeling and demonstrations. After individuals have had the opportunity to practice skills, training workshops become more effective (Sergiovanni, 1990).

Assessing Progress

For full inclusion to occur, regular monitoring and assessment need to be integral components of the change process. Continuous monitoring is necessary to coordinate inclusive efforts within the school and to deal with problems which may arise in an effective manner (Louis & Miles, 1990). According to Tompkins and Cooper (1993), monitoring entails the collection and assessment of data regarding what is occurring in classrooms on a periodic basis. Collection of such data may involve formal as well as informal procedures. Formal procedures for assessing the implementation of full inclusion can include surveys and observations. Hord (1992) suggests that effective leaders can informally monitor by frequently visiting classrooms, walking through school hallways, attending departmental and grade-level meetings, and conducting spontaneous conversations with individual staff members. Shortly after formally or informally observing staff members, effective leaders should also provide feedback for improving their use of new practices (Rutherford, 1985).

Prior to and during implementation of full inclusion, it is critical that concerns of teachers and other constituents are also addressed. Hall (1979) has identified seven stages of concern which users of an innovation (such as full inclusion) may experience. These are:

Stage 0	Awareness
Stage 1	Informational
Stage 2	Personal
Stage 3	Management
Stage 4	Consequence
Stage 5	Collaboration
Stage 6	Refocusing

Stages 0-2 are typically experienced during the initial planning phase of an innovation like full inclusion. Stage 3 typically occurs during the final stages of preparation and the initial stages of actual use. Stages 4-6 are evident when teachers are concerned with the effects of the innovation on students (Hord, Rutherford, Hulling-Austin, & Hall, 1987).

As school leaders begin to consider and plan for a restructuring effort like full inclusion, many of their teachers and other school personnel will exhibit *Awareness* concerns. They will know little about full inclusion. Facilitative leaders can involve these teachers in discussions about inclusive practices, providing them with just enough information to arouse their interest. They may also provide opportunities for these teachers and others to talk with teachers who have successfully used inclusive practices (Hord, Rutherford, Hulling-Austin, & Hall, 1987).

After teachers' interests are aroused, they will be interested in gathering more concise information about full inclusion (*Informational* concerns). Opportunities to observe teachers in schools that have adopted an inclusive philosophy may be helpful for these teachers. Leaders should also ensure that teachers see how their current practices are similar to and different from those being recommended (Hord et al., 1987).

As school leaders move from planning to implementation, many of their teachers will have *Personal* concerns—"How will this change affect me and the way I teach?" Encouragement and assurance of support are important at this point (Hord et al., 1987).

Once implementation begins, teachers and others will have questions regarding the "how-to's" of accommodating all students in the same classroom. These teachers have *Management* concerns. How to plan and organize for a wider range of student abilities, how to work with paraprofessionals and others to maximize their usefulness in the classroom, and how to go about collaborating with other teachers are some of the issues that teachers with management concerns will have. The facilitative leader will need to provide or arrange for support for these kinds of concerns.

When teachers become familiar with full inclusion and acquire the skills and experiences to deal with their management concerns, they may then be able to focus on the impact that they are having on their students. Teachers with *Consequence* concerns want to refine their teaching abilities. Staff development opportunities to learn new techniques, information, etc. about how to better meet their students' academic needs are important for teachers at this stage of concern.

Once teachers become skilled and confident in working with their students and support personnel, they are able to focus on improving the "system" even further.

Through *Collaboration* and *Refocusing*, they may be able to determine weaknesses in the way full inclusion is working and work together with other teachers and school leaders to improve services or organizational structures. In this way teachers are more efficient and effective and students are better served.

It is important for the facilitative leader to realize that not all teachers will have the same level of concerns at the same time. Nor will they progress at the same rates through these stages of concern. The role of the leader is to assess what concerns individual teachers have and to address those concerns appropriately. It is also important to realize that as modifications are made to address deficiencies noted from other monitoring efforts, teacher concerns will also change.

Providing Continuous Assistance

Successful implementation of inclusive practices require that facilitative leaders provide continuous assistance to teachers. As teachers become more familiar with inclusive practices, their concerns will change; thus, leaders need to be aware of such changes and provide appropriate assistance. Needed resources and staff development need to be more than "one-shot events" (Hord, 1992); as a result, continuous assistance is imperative for the success of full inclusion. Joyce and Showers (1980) refer to such assistance as "coaching". Coaching has been found by Bush (1984) to greatly influence the successful transfer of new practices into classrooms. Therefore, in-class demonstrations and modeling can be used to transfer knowledge obtained through research and theory into practice (Tompkins, & Cooper, 1993).

Summary

Restructuring of schools to implement full inclusion will require that school leaders consider various factors that influence change. Factors to consider include:

- Creating an atmosphere for change,
- Articulating the vision,
- Planning and providing resources,
- Providing training and development,
- Monitoring and checking progress, and
- Continuing to give assistance.

Creating an atmosphere and culture for change involves addressing the school's physical surroundings and structures, formal policies and rules, resources, attitudes and beliefs, and relationships. Articulating the vision emphasizes the importance of expanding the vision held by a few to a broad base of parents, students, and teachers. Articulating the vision also entails school leaders demonstrating their belief in full inclusion by acting in a manner that is consistent with their beliefs. Planning and providing resources involves the identification, planning and provision of time, money, building space, personnel, and other resources needed to appropriately educate all students in regular education classrooms. Providing continuous staff development, stresses that all constituents need to be provided with opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills necessary for the successful implementation of full inclusion. Assessing progress means regularly monitoring and assessing the progress toward full inclusion. Assessing progress also includes addressing the constituents' felt needs and concerns related to full inclusion. The final factor, providing continuous assistance, requires that resources and staff development are more than "one-shot events." "Coaching" is suggested to ensure that new practices for successful implementation of full inclusion are appropriately incorporated into regular education classrooms. By

considering all six factors, school leaders can facilitate the successful implementation of full inclusion.

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